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SUBJECT: MOLDOVA AND ROMANIA RESUME TALKS ON BORDER ISSUES

Sensitive But Unclassified. Please Protect Accordingly.

¶1. (SBU) Summary: Moldova and Romania resumed talks on the Border and Framework Treaties on May 14-15. These discussions are influenced by debates over the Local Border Traffic Convention proposed by Romania, which would establish a visa-free travel regime for residents of a 30-km zone along the border. The Government of Moldova proposed a simultaneous signing of the Border Treaty and the Local Traffic Convention. The Romanian Government sees no connection between the two documents. End Summary.

Negotiations Resume on Border Treaty  
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¶2. (SBU) A new round of Moldovan-Romanian border-related talks took place in Bucharest on May 14-15. New developments in the dispute over the State Border Treaty and the Framework Treaty occurred after Romanians suggested in March to the Moldovans that they sign the Local Border Traffic Convention (Accord) to establish a visa-free travel regime for residents of a 30 km zone along the border. (Note: The Convention is a framework document recommended by the EU to its members situated at external EU borders.)

Border Treaty versus Local Traffic Convention  
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¶3. (SBU) Even before the May 14-15 talks, Moldovan Foreign Minister Stratan stressed that it was impossible to sign the Convention, which explicitly refers to state borders, given the absence of a bilateral treaty which would define the border. Stratan reiterated Moldova's appeal to Romania to resume work on the two treaties and expressed readiness to sign the Convention simultaneously with the Border Treaty. The resumption of talks on May 14-15 was followed by contradictory assessments of the results of the talks made by the two sides. The Romanian MFA stated that the issue of the Convention had not been addressed at the talks, while the Moldovan MFA stated that it had been.

¶4. (SBU) Comment: The Government of Moldova is interested in signing the Border Treaty, and the Local Traffic Border Convention offers a good opportunity to raise again the whole range of Moldova-Romania border issues. Romania prefers to address the issues separately. Resumption of dialogue is a positive development. However, the sides will have to demonstrate flexibility to reach common ground, which will be difficult given the upcoming presidential elections in Romania and parliamentary elections in Moldova. End comment.